



Reform Redesign Report

Thirkell Elementary School

Detroit City School District

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Introduction

As a school identified by the Michigan Department of Education as a Priority school, you are required to select one of the four federal models for your reform/redesign plan. If your school is selecting the closure or restart models, you should contact the School Reform Office to discuss the next steps for implementing and documenting this effort. If selecting either the Transformation or Turnaround model, you should review and respond to all individual requirements of the selected model. These plans are reviewed and need to be approved by the School Reform Officer.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

 The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Thirkell Elementary is a PreKindergarten through fifth grade school. Thirkell Elementary is located at 7724 14th Street in the city of Detroit. Thirkell is the only neighborhood elementary school west of West Grand Boulevard, Linwood, Woodward, Clairmount, Second and Third Streets. Thirkell School was named in memory of Isabell F. Thirkell, a deceased Detroit Public School principal. Thirkell is located in a thriving community with several new housing developments. Thirkell School was named in memory of Isabell F. Thirkell a deceased Detroit Public School Principal who was born in England and came to America with her parents in 1858. The Thirkell School was built in 1914 and opened in September, 1915. The Thirkell building is ninety-eight years old and still in good condition because of its sound structure. The school's population for 2012-2013 is five hundred (500). Attendance is always ninety (90) percent or above with the gender ratio being fifty-two (52) percent male and forty-eight (48) percent female for 2012-2013. Fifty percent of the students attending Thirkell Elementary are bussed. Bussing is necessary because all of the elementary schools in the immediate area are closed (Brady, Fairbanks, Jamieson, McMichael, Sanders, and Woodward). Thirkell has been involved in consolidations six times. The students at Thirkell are well disciplined and come to school ready to learn. They are motivated and enthusiastic about learning new skills in an innovative, stress free climate. Ninety-five (95) percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch. Approximately one percent of our students are homeless. Students at the beginning of the school year completed a student survey and eighty percent (80) of them consider Thirkell a safe and healthy school that has high expectations for all students.

The staff at Thirkell Elementary is committed and dedicated to excellence. The principal, Dr. Clara A. Smith replaced fifty percent of the staff for the 2012-2013 school year due to retirements. The entire staff for 2012-2013 were interviewed by the principal, two (2) certified staff members, two (2) members of the Executive Board of the school's Local School Community Organization (LSCO), and Pamela Good (Business Partner and CEO of Beyond Basics). The teachers were rated using PD360 which is a comprehensive evaluation system authorized by the district as the official evaluation system for all certified staff applying for a teaching position with Detroit Public Schools. Teachers were evaluated in five areas as highly effective, effective, minimally effective, and ineffective. The areas of evaluation included: pedagogical skills, student growth, classroom management, professional development, and an educator's responsibility as a teacher. Along with the evaluation rubric, attendance, attitude, and a knowledge of the five (5) pillars of student achievement were discussed. The staff at Thirkell Elementary holds high expectations for all students, identifies the essential curriculum for grade levels PK through 5, and ensures that the curriculum is sequenced appropriately for increased academic success. Teachers ensure that planning and teaching is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and the standards are taught effectively using best practices and research based strategies. Teachers are able to use a number of formal and informal assessments that are aligned to the curriculum that guides instructional decisions that lead to mastery of identified skills in each discipline. The staff at Thirkell is determined and willing to be change agents for our students that will ensure academic success and a positive self esteem. Teachers are committed and provide rigorous instruction that fosters critical thinking, problem solving, and an innovative use of knowledge that prepare students for high school, college, and the world of work. The community at large encompasses the vision, mission, and beliefs of Thirkell School, it takes a village to educate a child. The community at large feels fortunate that the doors of Thirkell are still open and that great things are happening in the school. The Block Club, Virginia Park Community Council, in conjunction with Henry Ford Health Services, Duffield Library, William Walker Recreation Center, and the Union Grace Baptist Church are major stakeholders with Thirkell Elementary. Thirkell's Local School Community Organization (LSCO) is well represented at each monthly meeting. On the average seventy-five (75) to one hundred (100) parents attend the meetings and they are committed to the Parent Involvement Policy that includes parents in the decision making process of the school and a shared responsibility for high student academic achievement.

The challenges that most schools are facing including Thirkell are financial. It is essential that the upkeep of the building is a priority. The building must be maintained because of its age and whenever necessary, repairs and renovations must be made in a timely manner. Another challenge facing Thirkell is declining enrollment that could ultimately result in building closure.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The vision, mission, and beliefs are consistently communicated to all staff. As the vision, mission, and beliefs unfold, our purpose is very clear and direct. The vision and mission statements appear weekly in the weekly notes serving as a constant reminder of our purpose.

Vision Statement

Learning at Thirkell Elementary is a life long collaborative process. The staff is dedicated to meeting the challenges of providing rigorous instruction in all disciplines as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act. The curriculum at Thirkell Elementary is data driven and diverse to ensure that all students are competitive in a global society. A seamless transition for students will be created as they enter higher education that will ensure success in their chosen careers.

Mission Statement

The staff at Thirkell Elementary believes that learning is a life-long collaborative process. The staff is dedicated to meeting the challenges of providing support and cooperation to all members of the school community. The school's child centered approach and family community involvement encourage all students to understand and enjoy the learning process in a secure, caring, and nurturing environment. The staff believes that students will be encouraged to embrace and assume responsibility for their own learning.

Belief Statements

At Thirkell Elementary School we believe that all children can learn. It takes a community wide effort (village) to educate a child. Everyone must be held accountable for the education of our children. We believe that if students receive the necessary support and are nurtured and challenged, they will meet all expected educational goals. Students are challenged at Thirkell, thus creating excellence for every student in every classroom. Students must develop self-control and assume responsibility for their actions in order to prepare them for real world activities. They must develop self-esteem and a sense of pride, as well as develop pride and compassion for others.

We also believe that we do not exist in a vacuum, that we are part of a larger society, therefore, it is necessary to develop meaningful and healthy partnerships within the community to assist in accomplishing our goals and objectives.

Thirkell Elementary embodies its purpose by holding high expectations for all students and offering high level programs. The programs offered include music, art, physical education, and technology. Each program offers different levels of student cognitive thinking and self-expression.

Thirkell Elementary School has placed great emphasis on building a strong technological infrastructure and curriculum for students in grades K-5. A dedicated space was renovated and furnished with thirty-four desktop computers, two network printers, an interactive whiteboard, digital projector and a color laser printer. These desktop computers were replaced last spring and updated with the Detroit Public School's district approved hard-drive image.

Students in grades 3-5 have received a minimum of 150 minutes of computer-based instruction weekly for over 10 years in a lab setting. Thirkell Elementary School acquired two Apple MacBook carts and 20 iMac's in the past three years. The first cart was made available as part of the Detroit Public Schools' Summer Academy which was funded under the direction of Mr. Robert Bobb in 2008. The second cart and iMac's were acquired from a local school (Fairbanks) that closed in 2010. These mobile carts and iMacs provide additional access to technology for our younger learners.

Thirkell's Leadership Team has implemented a schedule for students in grades kindergarten through fifth to receive the mobile carts along with direct instruction utilizing available resources from Web 2.0 tools, Apple Office Mac Applications and district approved and licensed web-based resources such as Destination Learning, Raz-Kids, Renaissance Learning-Accelerated Reading, Accelerated Math, Star Reading and Star Math.

Thirkell's Leadership Team has placed a strong emphasis on meeting technology standards. We have adopted the following standards from SY 2012-2013

the International Society for Technology in Education for our technology instruction:

The National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) set a standard of excellence and best practices in learning, teaching, and leading with technology in education. The benefits of using the NETS include: Improving higher-order thinking skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity; Preparing students for their future in a competitive global job market; Designing student-centered, project-based, and online learning environments; Guiding systemic change in our schools to create digital places of learning; and inspiring digital age professional models for working, collaborating, and decision making. (Retrieved from: <http://www.iste.org/standards/> on Tuesday, October 30, 2012.)

Informal data and interviews from prior Thirkell students have shown technology readiness at the Middle school and High School level. Previous Thirkell students have returned to share grades and stories of success with their elementary school teachers. Several students have pursued web development, gaming and simulation. This is a strong indication that the technology instruction they received at Thirkell Elementary prepared them for ever-changing Web 2.0 tools and web-based technology and instruction.

The Thirkell Leadership Team continues to plan for a strong immersion of instructional technology for all of our students. We are currently developing a five-year instructional plan which will strengthen our commitment to students in order to meet and exceed the National Educational Technology Standards. Thirkell Elementary will continue to manage a working budget that allows for more teachers to have access to interactive whiteboards and training/in-services in order to use them effectively. Several technology grants for interactive whiteboards and projectors have been written and approved in the past two years. We currently have eight teachers utilizing interactive whiteboards in their classrooms. We are awaiting the installation of a new interactive whiteboard and digital projector in our newly renovated Science Laboratory. We expect the installation to be completed by November 30, 2012.

Dr. Clara A. Smith, Thirkell Elementary School principal, has selected a new educational technology instructor to facilitate instruction for students in grades 3-5. These students are receiving direct quality instruction toward mastery of the National Educational Technology Standards for Students. Our long-term goal is for students to be able to use technology to analyze, learn, and explore. Our leadership team understands that digital age skills are vital for preparing students to work, live, and contribute to the social and civic fabric of their communities (ISTE, 2012).

Thirkell Elementary is a rare school that provides a program with a full complement of instrumental music. Thirkell Elementary's Music Program, which focuses on Pre-Band, String Ensemble, and Concert Band, is offered to second through fifth grade students. Students learn skills similar to a foreign language. They learn the use of symbols, higher order cognitive skills, and self-expression. Second grade students work exclusively with recorders using a Pre-Band curriculum. String ensemble is the focus in third grade, working primarily with violins. Students in fourth grade work with concert band instruments, trumpets, clarinets, tubas, and saxophones, preparing for performances in the fifth grade concert band. Concert band performances are the focus in fifth grade, where students perform using the instrument introduced in the previous grade. The goal of Thirkell's Music Program is for students to become professional /semi-professional musicians throughout their lifetime.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Thirkell has been recognized by the Skillman Foundation as a High Performing School. Thirkell has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for ten years. Scores on the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) for grades three through five are always equal to or above the district. The report card grade for Thirkell has been a B for six years. Thirkell Elementary is also a GreatSchools top-rated Detroit School. The scale score received through the great school site is 8 out of 10. This information can be located on www.greatschools.org/michigan/detroit/. Not only is Thirkell academically an excellent school but the school offers art, gym, music (vocal and instrumental) as well as extra curricula activities. Students are encouraged to participate in writing and oratorical contests held at the school and district levels. The boys and girls Basketball team have been champions with the Elementary Basketball League (EBL) for three years. The girls have won first place in Cheerleading for two consecutive years.

The Voices of Thirkell, the school's choir, has performed at the Fisher Theatre, Cobo Hall, Lovett Hall at Greenfield Village, Wayne State University, Chrysler Financial, as well as at Mercedes Benz Corporation in conjunction with our Business Partner, Beyond Basics. Thirkell's String Ensemble has performed for our Local School community Organization (LSCO) meetings, school programs, and for Robert Bobb, former DPS emergency financial manger.

There is always room for improvement in any educational facility. We will continue to use planning time for analyzing data and creating action plans and instructional activities that will ensure that every Thirkell student is achieving and will be able to be productive citizens in society. Our school is committed to educating the whole child so that they will be able to compete in a global world. Thirkell staff will also continue to encourage parental involvement in the school because when parents are involved, student achievement increases and discipline decreases.

Student writing is a major concern and it is necessary that we have an organized consistent plan for writing in all grade levels. Writing Across The Curriculum is an area for improvement at Thirkell Elementary. We have Implemented, Drop Everything And Write (DEW) on a daily basis for fifteen minutes. A writing prompt is also put in the weekly notes for all grades. Students must be given every opportunity to write. Because of our poor writing scores on the MEAP, a writing lab was opened for all students in grades two through 5.

Additionally, the Thirkell Fine Art Department would like to engage in several fascinating projects between the years 2013 and 2016. The projects include:

1. Community Businesses- art students at Thirkell can benefit from partnering with businesses in/near the Thirkell community. These partnerships will allow them to see how advertising is done, products displayed and additional factors are involved in running a business. A long term partnership with caring professionals will have long-term benefits for students.
2. Skype- technology is inseparable from teaching and learning in today's world. Thirkell students will be able to share art work and activities with students in Australia, Japan, Spain and other classrooms around the world, just by communicating with them using face to face technology.
3. Assessment Mural Contest- Art students have learned that everything we see is made from lines and geometric shapes. These types of relevant assessment skills can be demonstrated for the entire student body through vivid 3-D murals displayed throughout Thirkell's hallways and classrooms. Grades K-5 can draw pictures to compete in this school wide competition. Winning drawings would be painted in selected areas by the fifth grade classes and parent volunteers as their legacy to the school.

The plan for Thirkell's Physical Education Department for the next three years will include a Fitness Day with students, staff, and the community participating in various physical activities. The activities would include stations consisting of strengthening exercises, cardio exercises, nutrition, childhood obesity, and exergaming. The plan would also integrate technology by using physical activity monitoring devices and exergaming. The monitoring devices will include heart rate monitors/wrist watches that calculate the student's heartbeat and

heart rate target zone. This will help track student performance, growth and development. Exergaming would include a Nintendo Wii. This will help to motivate all students to participate in Physical Education. It will encourage students to exercise using video games such as Dance Dance Revolution and Wii Fit. The students will mimic dance moves which require constant movement and physical activity. These games will teach students the importance of physical activity, developing healthy choices, and enjoyment of exercise.

Thirkell Elementary has had many notable achievements and has been successful at many of our endeavors including: increasing student achievement in all grade levels, maintaining highly qualified teachers, assessment mastery in reading and mathematics, building positive character traits within our students, increasing parental involvement as well as community/business partners and stakeholders in the Thirkell community. However, we are continuing to examine and implement best practice and programs to enhance the education and social welfare of each student attending Thirkell Elementary so that they will be productive citizens and able to compete in a global society.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

- *Consistent two-way communication with staff, students, parents, as well as serving as a listener
- *Frequent and on-going professional development activities
- *Grades are organized into clusters/teachers visiting classrooms within the building sharing strategies.
- *Common planning time for teachers in each grade level/common homework and bellwork assignments for each grade level. Monthly grade level meetings
- *Writing lab for students in grades 2 through 5
- *Writing laboratory for students in grades 1 through 5
- *Face to Face meetings (articulation with teachers in next grade levels)
- *Monthly family meetings with students and staff
- *Proper grouping of students for test mastery (high, middle, low)
- *Creating a warm, safe, positive climate where student achievement prevails
- *Building and enhancing technological skills of all students in PK through grade 5 with the stationary and mobile computer laboratories.
- *Increasing partnerships (private and community)
- *Increasing parental involvement in all school functions (LSCO, workshops, fieldtrips, room moms/dads, mentoring, hall monitors, lunchroom helpers, playground helpers, and ground keepers)

Turnaround Redesign Diagnostic

Introduction

The Turnaround Model includes, among other actions, replacing the principal and at least 50 percent of the school's staff, adopting a new governance structure and implementing a new or revised instructional program.

PART A: REFORM TEAM PERSONNEL

Please list the individuals involved in the development of this reform/redesign plan. Use a separate line to list each individual, and include name, title or role, and email contact information.

Dr. Clara A. Smith-Principal: clara.smith@detroitk12.org

Lee Wright-Academic Engagement Administrator: lee.wright@detroitk12.org

Scott Bania-Instructional Specialist: scott.bania@detroitk12.org

Jennifer Crump-Instructional Specialist: jennifer.crump@detroitk12.org

Jessonya Fitzpatrick- Instructional Specialist: jessonya.fitzpatrick@detroitk12.org

Marilyn McKinstry, Resource Room Teacher, marilyn.mckinstry@detroitk12.org

Pamela Key, Special Education Resource Room Teacher (Lower Ed.), pamela.key@detroitk12.org

Victoria Wilson-teacher: victoria.wilson@detroitk12.org

Julia Pitts-teacher: julia.pitts@detroitk12.org

Sonia Carter-Parent:bagldy06@yahoo.com

Lisa Cade-Parent:mrsrn27@yahoo.com

PART B: TEACHING AND LEARNING PRIORITIES

State 2-3 big ideas for your reform/redesign plan that are intended to change teaching and learning in your school. At least one of these should be instructional in nature. (These should come from the data dialogue that initiates your planning efforts.)

1. Based on the Teacher Perception Survey (adapted from www.michigan.gov) that was administered to the Thirkell staff in October 2012, it was determined that at least fifty percent of the instructional staff expressed a need for increased time for collaborative dialogue around student data. Prior to the survey, grade level teams met to analyze and interpret MEAP data using the Lipton Wellman Collaborative Learning Cycle model. We identified gaps in the five core academic areas. These findings led to examination of research-based practices from Robert DuFour who is known for establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLC). He believes that the key to improving learning for students is through continuous job embedded learning for educators. This research comes from DuFour's latest book entitled, *Whatever It Takes: How a Professional Learning Community Responds When Kids Don't Learn*. Additional information was also taken from *Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities* written by Robert Eaker, Richard DuFour and Rebecca Burnette. As a result of examination and review of data, the two areas of focus were identified; which were developing Professional Learning Communities and a creation of RTI, a Multi-Tiered Student Support System.

a. Professional development on PLC will be ongoing to establish a common language, process, and protocols. Professional Learning Communities will be held at biweekly Wednesday Staff meetings. Teachers will meet in grade level/content area teams and hold professional conversations to discuss best practices targeted on closing the achievement gap across the five core academic areas and increasing academic achievement of all Thirkell Elementary students. Teachers will work collaboratively to analyze data, improve instructional practices, and discuss vertical alignment across grade levels. Sign In sheets, agendas, and minutes will be evidence of meeting dates and times. The Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) will be used to assist and promote data dialogue.

b. Multi-Tiered Student Support System model (MTSSS) was selected based on the gaps identified in the MEAP data and staff data dialogues. MEAP data indicated that the percentage of students in each proficiency level over time on the MEAP Reading assessment represents an increase of students in level three by 10% and a decrease of students in level four by 4%. Nearly three times the number of students reached Level 1 proficiency levels in Fall 2009-2010 compared to only 8% in Fall 2011-2012. The percentage of students scoring in proficient levels over time on the MEAP Mathematics assessment shows a significant increase in proficiency from Fall 2008-2009 to Fall 2010-2011; an increase of 27%. Data from 2011-2012 shows a decrease in proficiency of 14% compared to Fall 2010-2011. The percentage of students scoring in proficient levels over time on the MEAP Writing assessment has dropped 32.5% in the past academic years. In the Fall of 2008-2009, 62.7% of Thirkell students scored in proficient levels compared to only 16.4% in Fall 2011-2012. There was a decrease of 46.3% in Fall 2011-2012 due to the new cut scores implemented in 2011-2012. Based upon the review of the data, MTSSS was selected as an intervention strategy.

MTSSS provides the framework for teachers to design the academic interventions that all students need in order to be successful. MTSSS allows for students to receive intentional reading, writing and math instruction in flexible settings and groupings. The MTSSS model is a three tiered approach which focuses on reading and writing instruction of all students. Tier I instruction is the level in which a highly qualified teacher instructs all students. Tier II instruction interventions are directed toward small groups that have specific learning strengths and weaknesses. Progress monitoring in Tier II is ongoing. Tier III intervention occurs when students are not making progress in Tier II. Students in Tier III have on-going progress monitoring and a diagnostic evaluation can later determine any changes needed in instruction. MTSSS uses differentiated instruction as an integral part of the intervention used for the students. The principles of this model can be found in *RTI Success: Proven Tools and Strategies for Schools and Classrooms* by Whitten, Esteves, & Woodrow, 2009.

The Leadership/School Improvement Team (SIT) at Thirkell Elementary will use the 2013-2014 school year to create and establish a Multi-Tiered Student Support System model (MTSSS) to help improve student achievement. Student assessment results from DIBELS, Star Reading, Star Math, Accelerated Reading, Accelerated Math, MEAP and MAP will be used to drive data decision making. We will begin to

SY 2012-2013

implement the Multi-Tiered Student Support System model (MTSSS) during the 2013-2014 school year.

c. The Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) is currently revising the universal school schedule in order to maximize instructional time for each day. The school schedule will be revised to incorporate an uninterrupted 120 minute Literacy Block. Research information was taken from Principal, November/December 2008, p. 21-23 as well as Educational Leadership, Summer 2005, volume 62. These articles focus on a successful literacy model which contains four blocks of instruction; 30 minutes of a guided reading block, a word study block, and a writing block, followed by 30 minutes of small group instruction which focuses on selected topic, such as reinforcing reading comprehension strategies with narrative and expository text studied in small group rotations..

State what data were used to identify these ideas.

A School Needs and Perception Survey indicated that 57% of the staff strongly agrees that more time is needed for professional growth. After meeting in grade level cohorts and engaging in data dialogues, the consensus was made that Professional Learning Communities are necessary to increase teacher capacity. Therefore, a Professional Development Calendar was created to provide opportunities for professional growth (please see attached PD Calendar). Instructional Specialists will use coaching strategies to provide job-embedded professional development. Administrators will perform Walk -Throughs, Look -Fors, and post teacher observations, and provide feedback to increase fidelity in teacher performance. During data dialogue reviews of MEAP, STAR, DIBELS, and Perception data (as referenced above), it was also determined there is a need for a strong student support system to help increase student achievement. All four types of data showed a consistent trend indicating an increase in students who were not proficient or two to three years below grade level. Professional development will be scheduled to increase teacher knowledge in the use of Response to Intervention (RTI), a Multi-Tiered Student Support System (MTSSS). This model will help to address students who are below grade level, on grade level, and above grade level as indicated by the assessment data. The MTSSS model is a three tiered approach which focuses on reading and writing instruction of all students. Tier I instruction is the level which a highly qualified teacher instructs all students. Tier II instruction interventions are directed toward small groups that have specific learning strengths and weaknesses. Progress monitoring in Tier II is ongoing. Tier III intervention occurs when students are not making progress in Tier II. Students in Tier III have on-going progress monitoring and a diagnostic evaluation can later determine any changes needed in instruction. Professional Learning Communities will address the needs indicated in perception data and assessment data for additional training and resources to increase student achievement in the core content areas. Based upon the data dialogue review that indicated gaps and declines in student proficiency trends, the Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) was created. The Thirkell Turnaround Team will monitor the systems in place for effectiveness of programs and determine if there is an increase in student learning, and make adjustments as deemed necessary through the ILC post-tests.

PART C: DEVELOP SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Describe how the building principal was replaced or how the existing principal meets the 2 year rule. Please include the leader's name and discuss how the leader meets the criteria for a turnaround principal.

Dr. Clara Smith was interviewed in June 2012 by Karen Ridgeway, Superintendent of Academics. Based upon the district interview, Dr. Clara A. Smith met the qualifications for a turnaround principal, she received a contract and was assigned to Thirkell Elementary.

Dr. Smith possesses the leadership skills needed for the Turnaround Principal by demonstrating the following characteristics: she monitors the use of data from assessments, curriculum and instruction and other achievement related efforts (e.g. award programs, science fairs, writing contests, art contests, monthly Accelerated Reader contests, weekly reading logs, and Academic Games).

She actively participates with SIP Team, Thirkell School Leadership Team, grade and content level PLC's, and Local School Community Organization (LSCO). Dr. Smith also fosters articulation between feeder schools by arranging opportunities for schools to communicate internally and externally. Thirkell staff views Dr. Smith as a change leader who diligently collaborates to demonstrate her vision through reform efforts as evidenced by the culture climate survey.

PROFESSIONAL VITAE

Dr. Clara A. Smith is principal of Thirkell Elementary. She has been Principal of Thirkell Elementary for eleven (11) years. Thirkell has been recognized by the Skillman Foundation as a High Performing School. Thirkell Elementary is recognized as a top-rated Detroit School from Great Schools. The scale score received through the Great School site is 8 out of 10. This information can be located on www.greatschools.org/michigan/detroit/. The students at Thirkell Elementary have made Adequate Yearly Process (AYP) for nine years with a Report Card grade of B. As the Instructional Leader of Thirkell Elementary she provides a rigorous, rich curriculum that will empower the teachers and students; furnish an environment that supports and enhances learning; build a learning environment that focuses on purposeful instruction, curiosity and sociability of the learner that will take the scope of inquiry as its base for continued growth. Teachers and students work collaboratively in supporting each other's inquiry in Thirkell's learning-centered environment. Excellence from all staff is a must. Dr. Smith is a risk taker. She knows what is needed to have an effective school and Thirkell is an effective school where learning for understanding is the main priority.

Dr. Smith is a transformational leader. She works in collaboration with the entire staff to implement the school vision and help teachers become instructional specialists in their areas of expertise. She's committed to empowering and encouraging teachers to make sound instructional decisions that impact student achievement. Her greatest areas of strength are her organizational skills and people skills. She has a passion for her job and she loves her students, parents, and school community. She is committed to focusing on the learning of each student; therefore, she and the Leadership Team have organized the entire grade level structure of Thirkell Elementary. Students in kindergarten through third grades are in self contained homerooms with a Science Specialist. Students in grades 4 and 5 plateau to special classes: English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. There is one self contained class in grade 4 and one self contained grade in grade 5. Testing data, horizontal and vertical, is used to analyze the pros and cons of self contained classrooms versus platooned classrooms where students receive instruction from a Science and Mathematics Specialist. With the flexibility with Title 1 funds, the school offers art, gym, music, and computers as electives.

Her vision, mission, and basic beliefs for the students as well as the learning community at Thirkell Elementary are constantly and consistently communicated to all students, staff, and stakeholders. As the vision unfolds, goals are very clear and direct. She models and communicates her vision at all times. Thirkell's mission is recited daily by all students over the morning broadcast. "All students can learn and will learn." The ability to give accurate information and to speak in an organized manner on the many wonderful things that are happening at Thirkell Elementary has been another source of her strength and success. She firmly believes that in order to have a successful and effective school it is essential that the leader be able to communicate in a positive way to all staff. She is able to communicate clear,

coherent messages to her staff, students, parents, and community. She is an excellent listener and knows the importance of two way communication. In the Carnegie Report, one of the main goals for success is that you must love doing what you do. She leads by following, by serving, and inviting others to share. Effective schools are labeled with positive climates where everyone knows the importance of doing their job, where respect and compassion is a must. She practices leadership pedagogy by exhibiting Best Practices in Education, building level decision making, distributed leadership, teamwork, and dedication.

Describe how the district will provide the school with operational flexibility (staffing, calendars, time, budgeting) to implement a comprehensive approach to substantially increase student achievement and increase graduation rate.

The District in collaboration with the Detroit Federation of Teachers negotiated new contractual language allowing for operational flexibility that will support the school's TurnAround efforts. This operational flexibility includes flexibility with staffing, school calendars, school times, budgeting, professional development activities, and other operational duties that will support the comprehensive approach to substantially increase student achievement and increase graduation rates.

Operational flexibility with interviewing and the hiring of teachers for 2012-2013 allowed the Principal along with the School Improvement and Leadership Teams to make solid decisions on selecting the most Highly Qualified teachers for Thirkell Elementary. Excellent teachers must be at the center of any successful school. Ensuring that our students have the best teachers from their first day in school until they graduate is the most critical responsibility we share. With the proper academic placement of staff, student achievement will increase in all grade levels. With additional support from School Service Assistants and tutors, teachers can identify students who need additional assistance in reading and mathematics. Rigorous, relevant instruction that's individualized or in small groups will surely decrease Thirkell's achievement gap.

Consolidation of all school funds (Board and Title I), allows flexible hiring of additional teachers, School Service Assistants, secretarial staff and Buy-In Services. Building maintenance personnel are sub-contracted and placed by the District. Buy-In Services include Project Seed, Entrepreneur Works, and Communities In Schools. For example, Communities In Schools (CIS) is a program that provides outside resources to students with physical and emotional needs. During the 2010-2011 school year, 87 percent of the students CIS monitored reduced their high-risk behavior through a combination of services that included after-school programs, mentoring, counseling, conflict resolution, and pregnancy prevention programs (<http://www.communitiesinschools.org/our-impact/proven-results/result/87-students-reduced-their-high-risks-behaviors>). CIS affords staff members to assist students academically in small group settings or one-on-one. They may work in small groups with students who are scoring low on academic assessments such as Dibels, Accelerated Reading, Accelerated Math, Measures of Academic Progress, and the Michigan Assessment Program (MEAP). They can also assist students who may need minimal intervention and provide students with before and after school tutoring and formal instruction on Saturdays to meet their academic needs.

Budget flexibility allows for After School Programs as well as for Professional Development Consultants for staff development and Professional Development In-services for staff in district as well as outside of the district. The school has the responsibility and plays a critical role in providing relevant on-going, high quality Professional Development for all staff (instructional and non-instructional) that is aligned with the school's instructional program. The Principal and Leadership Team have the flexibility to develop Thirkell's Professional Development Calendar in conjunction with the Professional Development that is offered by the District. Please see attached Professional Development Calendar in "Updated 2012-2013 Turnaround Assurances".

While addressing the school calendar and school time allocations, Thirkell has the flexibility to use Block Scheduling for English Language Arts/Social Studies and Mathematics /Science per District approval. Once approved, Thirkell will put in place the new Block Schedule which consists of two 120 minute blocks for English Language Arts daily ensuring academic success with a focus on Reading (Informational and Expository). Fifty minutes weekly of additional instructional time in Mathematics and Science will also ensure increased student achievement and academic success. The last sixty-five minutes every Friday will be used for small group tutoring, peer tutoring, one-on-one tutoring, and cross grade level tutoring. Please see attached Universal School Schedule in "Updated 2012-2013 Turnaround Assurances".

The Thirkell Leadership Team recognizes the influence that technology has on motivating students and providing engagement. We will concentrate on closing the "motivation gap" in order to reduce the achievement gap in much of our student population. The Thirkell Leadership Team is currently working with the Detroit Public Schools' (DPS) Informational Technology Department in order to select the necessary peripherals that will be supported by DPS and increase teacher's ability to integrate technology into their curriculum. We are currently seeking additional digital projectors as the use of multimedia addresses multimodal learning and has been shown through research to produce significant gains in student achievement (Cisco, 2008). Budgeting flexibility will enable us to purchase these necessary peripherals.

Describe how the school will use locally adopted competencies to measure the effectiveness of the principal and staff who works within the turnaround school.

Thirkell Elementary School Principal and Academic Engagement Officer use teacher observations to measure the effectiveness of staff who work within the turnaround school. Observation 360 and PD 360 will be used to offer additional support.

In 2011, District Principals and AEA's were given the charge to share a teacher evaluation model with instructional staff during the November 8, 2011 professional development. During the professional development session, instructional staff commented on the evaluation model using the Educator Evaluation Response Form. Instructional staff developed verbiage indicating what it looks like to be an ineffective, minimally effective, effective, and highly effective teacher. The data was compiled and given to each building principal. Principals gathered the data and sent the information back to the district. A district approved Teacher Evaluation tool was developed and presented to Thirkell teachers in March 2012. In order for a teacher to be rated highly effective, they must demonstrate 25% student growth and meet the other criteria of the four main core elements in the teacher evaluation tool.

Teachers will be evaluated six times a year. An administrator will observe teachers using the Effective Lesson Look-Fors observation checklist, an informal evaluation, every October, November, January, and February. Additionally, an administrator will formally observe teachers using the Inter-Rater 360 once every semester during the months of December and April. The administrator and teacher will debrief after each observation. In June each teacher will meet with an administrator to review and discuss the teacher's yearly summative evaluation. During this review the teacher will provide evidence and artifacts to support their professional growth, teacher effectiveness, and student data.

The Detroit Public School District Superintendent measures the effectiveness of Principals and Academic Engagement Administrators by the following categories; academics, home school connection, student growth, and school operations. Academics are measured by the effectiveness of the school improvement plan and priority plan, staff communication, professional development, schedules, and teacher observation and walk-through summaries. Parent communication, parent meetings, and training for parents are considered for the home school connection measurement. Student growth is measured by local and state assessment data, student code of conduct violations, grade distribution reports, student individual development plans, and Resource Coordinating Team (RCT) data. Yearly, school administrators interview with the District Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, and selected Central Office Administrators to discuss and review relevant evidence from the previous school year surrounding the four areas of measurement. Rehiring and termination decisions are determined by the District interview team.

The District provided the following timeline for the newly aligned Principals and Academic Engagement Administrator's evaluation tool:

February, 2013 - Detroit Public Schools will align current DPS administrator evaluation tool to domains mandated by MDE and developed by our internal team.

February 2013 to April 2013 - DPS will develop a rubric for all domains of the evaluation tool utilizing the evaluation scale mandated by MDE.

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May 2013 - DPS Legal Council will vet the evaluation tool for inclusion in 2013-14 school administrator contracts.

June 2013 to July 2013 - Detroit Public Schools will provide school administrators with professional development pertaining to the new evaluation tool.

August 1, 2013 - Detroit Public Schools will fully implement the administrator evaluation tool.

The original administrative evaluation of tool utilized by Detroit Public Schools was reviewed after receipt of the MCEE Final Recommendations. It was determined that the tool needed to be updated with components aligned to the administrator evaluation recommendations. The components that were sustained include the Initial Goal Setting and Mid-Year Review of Goals. Below you will find a timeline for the development, implementation and inclusion of the additional components that were added to the tool. The initial goal setting was based upon the School Improvement/Reform-Redesign Goals that were submitted in the School Improvement Plans.

Timeline for 2013-2014 Evaluation Implementation:

August 1, 2013 to September 1, 2013 - Review of School Improvement Plans and Updating School Improvement Goals

September 1, 2013 - Principals submitted School Improvement Goals (The goals set in the School Improvement or Reform/Redesign plans are the basis of the indicators used in the administrator evaluation tool used in Detroit Public Schools.)

October to December 2013 - Review Collection of Data (Assessment, Observation, Attendance, Diagnostic Reviews, Teacher Observation, and Student, Parent, Teacher Survey Data)

January to February 2014 - Mid Year Review and Collection of Feedback (Principals will meet with their supervisors to review the school improvement goals. They will also have an opportunity to provide feedback on the process for providing progress, evidence, and artifacts towards meeting their goals.)

March to May 2014 - Review of Data Collection (Principals will continue to review assessment, School Improvement Progress, attendance rates, and Assessment, Observation, Attendance, Diagnostic Reviews, Teacher Observation, and Student, Parent, Teacher Survey Data. Monthly meetings will be held with Assistant Superintendents to analyze the data collected. Verbal and written feedback will be provided to the principals on the data collected which will include recommendations for any areas of concern.)

June 2014 - Final Summative Evaluation Conducted

Final Summative Evaluation will consist of the following measures:

- 1) Continuous Improvement Practices - An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.
- 2) Instructional Leadership - An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
- 3) Managerial Leadership - An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
- 4) Organizational Leadership - An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interest and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
- 5) Professional Ethics - An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Detroit Public Schools will continue to update the Administrative Evaluation Tool as recommendations are provided by the MCEE.

Specify how the school will screen all existing staff and rehire no more than 50 percent.

The principal of Thirkell Elementary along with certified staff, Parent Advisory Council on Student Achievement (PACSA), and Pamela Good

(Business Partner and CEO of Beyond Basics) had the opportunity for the 2012-2013 school year to interview the most highly qualified teachers employed by Detroit Public Schools as well as teachers from out of the district. Teachers were screened according to their ability and willingness to support the goals of the school. Fifty (50%) percent of the original Thirkell staff were retained for the 2012-2013 school year. The following criteria was used and will be used to screen teachers to hire for the 2013-2014 school year and no more than 50% of current staff will remain at Thirkell Elementary:

- * Review of performance evaluations from Observation 360 and PD360 which is a comprehensive evaluation system that assesses teachers' competency and effectiveness of their teaching. Teachers will be evaluated in five core element from the District mandated teacher evaluation tool which are; demonstrating pedagogical skills, student growth, classroom management, professional development, and their responsibility as an educator for professional growth. Ratings are: highly effective, effective, minimally effective, and ineffective. Beginning in the 2012 school year, teachers will be evaluated five times a year. A building administrator will observe teachers using the Effective Lesson Look- For checklist twice every semester and observe teachers using the Inter-Rater 360 once every semester, totaling six evaluations per year. The administrator and teacher will debrief after every observation. In June each teacher will be meet with an administrator to review their summative evaluation. During this review teachers will provide evidence and artifacts to support their professional growth, teacher effectiveness, and student data.
- * Recommendations from colleagues
- * Review of student performance indicators
- * Willingness and ability to support and implement all school improvement initiatives
- * Willingness and ability to participate in distributed leadership
- * Willingness and ability to collaborate in work groups and Leadership Teams
- * Willingness and ability to actively participate and implement Professional Development beyond a superficial level
- * Ability to implement a standard based curriculum and data driven decision making

School Service Assistants are hired based upon a successful interview and must develop an employee development plan each year. They must maintain a School Service Assistant Daily Log of activities and the tutorial services rendered to the Title I students. Mid-semester each School Service Assistant is evaluated based upon entries in their School Service Log and this evidence should demonstrate their work with targeted Title I students. Each SSA is given a final evaluation at the end of the year.

Detail how the school will implement strategies, such as increased opportunities for promotion and career growth, and/or flexible working conditions, designed to recruit and retain staff to meet the needs of students in a transformational school.

The Transformation/Turnaround schools will work in conjunction with the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) Talent Acquisition Department, (TAD) in the development of promotional opportunities and career growth as well as enhancing flexible work arrangements to meet the needs of staff.

The District has a strategic focus on recruitment with most activities supplemented through face-to-face recruitment visits concentrated on new sources for applicants. Job fairs, presentations at teacher training institutions and regional meetings are typical.

Transformation/Turnaround schools will benefit from sustainable relationships with institutions of higher education to recruit highly qualified individuals through traditional and alternative certification routes.

The Transformation/Turnaround Schools with support from the TAD will enhance it's University partnerships and expand upon it's community based relationships for the purpose of sourcing highly effective Teaching staff.

Project Pathways Transition to Teach Grant Program:

A partnership initiative between Wayne State University (WSU), the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) and the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) designed to expedite the opportunities for current non-certified employees to obtain teacher certification and ultimately increase the certified teacher pool for the district. Project Pathways will assist the Transformation/Turnaround Schools in increasing the pool of qualified

teachers.

Michigan State University's Urban Immersion Teacher Program

Designed as a seven-week immersion experience, fellows work with the DPS Transformation/Turnaround Schools, youth and families. The intent of this collaborative effort is to facilitate the readiness of teacher candidates to provide future leadership in urban education; which will facilitate access, by DPS, to a talent pool for future employment recruitment. All fellows are assigned a master teacher/supervisor, engage in orientation and reflective seminars, as well as receive in-depth exposure to DPS, Transformation/Turnaround Schools, community and resources.

District-University Student Teacher Program

The Student Teacher Program is designed to attract pre-service teachers from the Detroit-area universities, as well as in and out-of -state schools of education, by offering support through the final phase of the traditional teacher certification process. They are lead and mentored by Transformation/Turnaround School's Cooperating Teachers.

Promotional Opportunity/Career Growth

The Transformation/Turnaround schools have numerous career path opportunities with regard to the advancement of Teachers. The positions include both Instructional and Administrative responsibilities. Growth and/or Career Opportunities include, Cooperating Teachers, Coaches, Instructional Specialists, Instructional Technologists, Academic Engagement Officer, Assistant Principals and Principals.

Flexible Working Conditions

The Transformation/Turnaround Schools with the support of the District's Compensation and Benefits Department will enhance retention strategies by re-evaluating the existing compensation program and determining inequitable practices and making adjustments as appropriate. There are plans for the incorporation of a wellness program, addressing the needs of the District's aging Teacher population. Additional efforts are being made to enhance the existing Family Medical Leave Act Program, through the incorporation of earned vacation time for absences occurring within such a period. Continuous use of the sick leave donation program will assist with retention efforts for Teachers struggling with medical related factors.

Additional retention successes are expected due to the modifications of Teacher Performance requirements thereby ensuring that highly effective Teachers are placed within the District, ultimately positively impacting the environment for staff and students.

Teachers will be identified as highly effective based on their most recent teacher evaluation rating, recommendations from colleagues, review of student performance indicators, willingness and ability to participate in distributed leadership, ability to collaborate in work groups and leadership teams, actively participate and implement professional development, and ability to implement standards based curriculum and data driven decision making.

Building level incentives to retain highly qualified staff include creating flexible working conditions and flexible scheduling to provide professional development opportunities during the school day but not limited to release time for collaborative planning, financial incentives such as additional pay for Before School, After School, Saturday and Summer School, and a performance pay incentive stipend.

PART D: COMPREHENSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL REFORM STRATEGIES

Describe plans and timelines for ongoing, high quality, job embedded professional learning (subject specific pedagogy, differentiated instruction or a deeper understanding of the community served). Show how professional learning is aligned and designed to ensure that staff can facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement the school reform strategies.

Thirkell Elementary Professional Development Plan (PDP) will be implemented in January 2014. PLC meetings will be held monthly in grade level and content area teams. Professional development on PLC will be ongoing to establish a common language, process, and protocols. Professional Development Plan given by the Principal, Academic Engagement Administrator, Instructional Specialists, and outside experts will cover topics such as MTSSS and PLC's. An online resource, PD 360, will be utilized to provide Job Embedded training that will be discussed during grade level team common planning periods. Time for professional development will be given during Wednesday staff meetings, grade level meetings and common planning periods. Teachers will meet monthly in professional learning communities and grade-level meetings to review student work. Teachers will identify each class's overall areas of relative strengths and weaknesses so that teachers can appropriately allocate instructional time and resources. Teachers will also share instructional and assessment methods and adapt classroom strategies to meet the needs of their students. A Professional Development Plan was developed using the Thirkell Needs and Perception Survey, MEAP, DIBELS, and STAR Math and Reading assessment data (outcome data), process data, demographic data and grade level team dialogues and data analysis. Support measures that are in place to monitor timely implementation of effective teaching and learning strategies include: the use of Effective Lesson Look- Fors, checklist based on the observation, debriefing comments following the observation, an Observation 360 plan for effective teaching strategies, recommendations for additional coaching and job embedded training with building Instructional Specialists, and additional professional development provided by the district, county, and state. The attached professional development calendar is aligned to our Big Ideas which are establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and the Multi-Tiered Student Support System (MTSSS) Framework. Our Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) will establish a common language, process, protocols and data dialogues to implement effective teaching strategies and improve student learning. The Multi-Tiered Student Support System (MTSSS) is a framework that will be used to identify student needs and deficiencies that will address academic interventions to elevate student achievement. Instructional Learning Cycles will identify how students will be placed in MTSSS tier groups. Using the scale from the pre and post tests to determine the tier groups for student intervention. Both of these Big Ideas support school reform strategies. Please note that the Professional Development (PD) calendar reflects the ongoing process of: analysis of data, data dialogues, implementation of strategies from the data dialogues, evaluation/assessment of strategies and the need to modify instruction or reteach based upon data results. These Professional Development initiatives are in alignment with the data deficiencies and to the school's academic goals.

Describe the new governance structure adopted that will assist with the building turnaround process. The new governance may include a turnaround office, or a turnaround leader who reports directly to the superintendent.

The new governance structure for Thirkell Elementary consists of the Assistant Superintendent for Turnaround Schools, the Superintendent of Academics, the Financial Manager, the Wayne RESA School Improvement Facilitator, the Michigan State Intervention Specialist, DPS School Improvement Coaches, and DPS LSI monitor. During data dialogue reviews of MEAP, STAR, DIBELS, and Perception data it was determined there is a need for a strong student support system to help increase student achievement. All four types of data showed a

consistent trend indicating an increase in students who were not proficient or two to three years below grade level. Based upon the data dialogue review that indicated gaps and declines in student proficiency trends, the Thirkell Turnaround Team was created. This will be the governance structure at the school level. This team will consist of the building principal, Academic Engagement Officer, Instructional Specialists, and Teacher Leaders. The principal will select lead teachers to help implement the plan at each grade level. Each member of the Thirkell Turnaround Team will have a defined role to support student achievement. Together, this new governance structure will bring the necessary reform to shift student achievement.

It will be the responsibility of the lead teacher to meet monthly with their grade level teams. Each meeting will be documented with an agenda, recorded notes, and a sign in sheet to provide evidence that each meeting has taken place. These meeting times will be used for planning, pacing instruction, collecting and analyzing data, vertical articulation and planning research-based intervention strategies. Teachers will also share concerns, discuss their teaching strategies and make decisions based upon data. It is also the responsibility of the teacher to progress monitor all students to determine the type and intensity of any further interventions needed. Grade level lead teachers will share the monthly outcomes with instructional specialists. Instructional specialists will ensure that all data, measurement and assessment tools are being used accurately and effectively. It will also be the responsibility of the instructional specialists to coordinate professional development to the staff. The building principal and Academic Engagement Administrator will participate in weekly classroom Walk-Throughs, two Look-For observations per semester (informal) in October November, January, and February. The principal will conduct one formal (Inter-Rater 360) observation each semester in December and April. To create sustainability the Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) will monitor the systems in place for effectiveness of programs and determine if there is an increase in student learning, and make adjustments as deemed necessary by the continued review of assessment data. Thirkell Turnaround Team meetings will be used to review and evaluate all new student data and make any necessary changes to the reform process. Any changes that need to be made will be communicated to all stakeholders involved.

Detail how the use of data will identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based and aligned from one grade to the next, as well as with state standards.

Thirkell Elementary School will collaborate with the Offices of Literacy, Mathematics, Sciences and the History, Society & Culture departments to ascertain, evaluate and determine valid and reliable data and assessment tools. Further research will be gathered by Thirkell's Turnaround Team (TTT) to seek additional current research-based instructional and assessment methods to strengthen all of our core academic values. All instruction will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards and Detroit Public Schools' academic guidelines. Our Professional Learning Communities (PLC) will continue to strengthen and align the curriculum across all grade levels during monthly PLC meetings. We will work in our Professional Learning Communities to build an understanding of building-wide vertical alignment so that teachers can build upon students' prior knowledge. Additionally, teachers will make use of the Common Core State Standards as provided by Michigan Department of Education, to ensure that common learning practices are promoted in all classrooms. Student data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted from the following resources: Student Information Services, Renaissance Place: Star Reading and Math, Accelerated Reader and Accelerated Math, Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), MEAP Results, teacher-generated rubrics, checklists, surveys, and quarterly academic achievement progress reports. Professional Learning Communities will collaborate monthly to analyze grade level data, discuss similarities and differences across all grade levels and formulate unit plans and lessons that provide re-teaching experiences as well as challenging curriculum that is motivating, engaging and directly related to the Common Core State Standards.

The Thirkell Turnaround Team analyzed the previous four years of MEAP data. The percentage of students scoring in proficient levels over time on the MEAP test for Reading (aggregate of all grade levels from Fall 2008 to Fall 2012) has a low score of 60% proficiency in Fall 2008- 2009 and a high proficiency level of 88% in Fall 2009-2010. This has dropped significantly in the past two years; 80% in Fall 2010-2011 and 74% in Fall 2011-2012. This data represents a steady decline over the past two years in MEAP Reading scores.

The percentage of students in each proficiency level over time (aggregate of all grade levels) on the MEAP Reading test represents an

increase of students in level three by 10% and a decrease of students in level four by 4%. Nearly three times the number of students reached Level 1 proficiency levels in Fall 2009-2012 compared to only 8% in Fall 2011-2012. This data reinforces our need to restructure our literacy instruction.

The percentage of students scoring in proficient levels over time (aggregate of all grade levels) on the MEAP Mathematics test shows a significant increase in proficiency from Fall 2008-2009 to Fall 2010-2011; an increase of 27%. Data from 2011-2012 shows a decrease in proficiency of 14% compared to Fall 2010-2011. This decrease in proficiency warrants the need to provide more effective mathematics instruction.

The percentage of students scoring in proficient levels over time (aggregate of all grades) on the MEAP Writing test has dropped 51% in the past academic year and 56% over the past two academic years. In the Fall of 2008-2009, 68% of Thirkell students scored in proficient levels compared to only 12% in Fall 2011-2012. This is a tremendous decline in writing scores and warrants immediate intervention. The Thirkell Turnaround Team is currently in the process of collaborating and planning with grade level team members for students in grades 3 to 5. Students in Kindergarten through second grade are currently receiving additional writing instruction (up to 3 hours weekly) in a dedicated classroom with a highly-qualified primary writing specialist.

The percentage of Thirkell students scoring in proficient levels from 2008- 2012 shows drastic decreases among Fall 2009-2010 scores and Fall 2011-2012 scores. There was a dramatic increase of 32% in proficiency levels from Fall 2009 to Fall 2010, followed by a decline of 18% in Fall 2011-2012. However, the State of Michigan saw a decline of 63% for grade 5 students from Fall 2010 to Fall 2011. In the Fall of 2010, 78% of students in grade 5 scored in proficient levels, followed by only 15% of grade 5 students meeting proficiency in Fall 2011. Thirkell's grade 5 students scored nearly double the state average (29%) in Fall 2011-2012. The percentage of students in each proficiency level over time (aggregate of all grades) for Science shows an increase of 17% in Level 4. This is the highest percentage of students in Level 4 in a four-year period of test data. Students in Levels 1 declined by 14% from the previous year (Fall 2010) and only 4% in Level 2 from the previous year (Fall 2010). Overtime, students on proficiency Level 2 have remained consistent. The decline in students for Level 1 and the increase of students in Level 4 remains to be our largest concern. The Thirkell Turnaround Team and lead teachers within our Professional Learning Communities will continue to analyze the data, observe classroom instructional practices and work toward building a stronger universal model of instruction and assessment to raise achievement at all grade levels.

Based on data analysis and dialogue, the Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) and instructional staff will use the research-based Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC). The ILC will provide data that assists in the instructional alignment from one grade to the next as well as to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Currently in use at Thirkell Elementary are SRA Imagine It! Reading program and Accelerated Math program. These research based programs have a strong focus on Differentiated Instruction giving teachers more opportunities to teach every student based on their current instructional level. Both programs help students develop skills to think and investigate answers to their own questions; thus, promoting curiosity, investigation, and higher -order thinking which directly correlates with the CCSS.

Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC's) have proven to be successful in the Chula Vista Elementary School District in San Diego County, the largest K-6 elementary school district in the State of California. The district first implemented the use of ILC's in 2007. The district saw tremendous student growth on the California Academic Performance Index (API). The test ranges from 200 to 1000 with the state standard set at 800. In 2002, the district's overall range was 653. In 2009, the district's overall had reached 833 and in 2011 the overall range was 861.

Thirkell Elementary will engage in Instructional Learning Cycles (ILCs) to monitor instructional practices and make adjustments. The ILC will further identify low performing students. Differentiated Instruction will take place in reading, math, science, social studies and writing. Instructional Learning Cycles will be conducted throughout the school year. During job embedded professional development, teachers will strengthen their knowledge on the principles of differentiated instruction. Instructional Specialist will provide ongoing support as needed. Teacher mentors will be assigned for additional support as recommended by the Thirkell Leadership Team. During Professional Learning Communities all teachers collaborate using data dialogues and data analysis to strengthen the instructional delivery and improve student learning.

The ILC will focus on a specific strategy/skill to be taught in grades K-6 based on data analysis and dialogue. The research based instructional program Multi-Tiered Student Support System (MTSSS), formerly known as Rtl, is vertically aligned to the Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC). ILC Pre-test data will identify student's multi-tiered levels for the ILC Instructional Cycle. During the ILC Instructional Cycle, teachers will differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students. All ILC learning objectives will be aligned to the school improvement plan data as well as the Common Core Standards.

Thirkell staff will revisit instructional priorities each semester and based upon data analysis and collaborative dialogue priorities will be reviewed and adjusted as needed for the 2013-2014, 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years.

Describe how the school will promote the continuous use of individual student data (such as formative, interim and summative) to inform and differentiate instruction to meet individual student needs.

To ensure our students continue to excel academically throughout the course of the school year, we will continue to use data from our formative, interim, and summative assessments which will be aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) will target the specific needs of the students. Data identified from the Instructional Learning Cycle will determine that MTSSS tiered groups meet the individual style and learning needs of each student. Formative, summative, and interim data will be collected to monitor the effectiveness of instructional techniques.

Formative assessments will be given to students after a particular skill or concept is taught during that day or course of the week. Interim assessments will be given to measure student achievement based on Common Core State Standards and will help to inform instruction by sampling important learning goals throughout each grade level. Interim assessments will be measured in the form of Benchmark Assessments, DIBELS, STAR Math and Reading. The goal of summative assessments is to measure the level of success or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of the marking period, semester, and school year. Summative assessments would be in the form of Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), report card marking periods (MKI, MKII, MKIII), and final cumulative grades (MKIV).

These assessments will align with our District's Core Curriculum and Common Core State Standards. This data will be used to help place students into three tiers using the Multi-Tiered Student Support System model. Grade Level Team meetings will be held bi-weekly where data is reviewed and evaluated. Cross grade level meetings will be held once per card marking. Data from these assessments will be used in our PLC's, grade level teams, School Improvement Team, and the Thirkell Turnaround Team to direct instruction and develop meaningful professional development in all core disciplines (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) to increase student achievement across all grade levels.

On going dialogue of student assessment data will be shared across the grades at the end of every card marking in cross grade-level meetings. The purpose of these shared sessions is to review, evaluate, and guide implementation of Multi-Tiered Student Support Systems. Information collected from data dialogues will be given to the Thirkell Turnaround Team regarding Best Practices for implementing strategies to ensure academic success for all students.

PART E: INCREASED LEARNING TIME AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Explain how the school will establish schedules and strategies that provide for increased time for all students to learn core academic content by expanding the school day, week or year. How much extra time has been added? Also how will the increased learning time include other enrichment activities for students and provide for increased collaboration time for teachers?

The Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) is currently revising the universal school schedule in order to maximize instructional time for each day. The team has reviewed several templates for block-scheduling and has prepared an attachment demonstrating a 120 minute English Language Arts block schedule for rotating/platooning classes of students in 4th and 5th grade during the morning and afternoon rotation. The ELA Block Schedule was developed in order to address the frequent interruptions and rotation of classes throughout the school week which left many teachers frustrated and hurried to accomplish the many lessons/objectives affiliated with the State of Michigan's Department of Education and the Detroit Public School Districts' English Language Arts expectations. Further plans for students in grades K-3 account for an extended day program three days a week. This will lead to seven additional hours of instruction and will include enrichment activities that support the Common Core State Standards.

Recent research indicates that schools following an expanded opportunity model (EOM) may have an educational impact on children living in at-risk or low-income areas; however, there has not been enough significant and rigorous data to support this claim. The Thirkell Turnaround Team will continue to review current research and models that may have the greatest impact for our student population. (District Administration, retrieved on Thursday, February 07, 2013 from: <http://www.districtadministration.com/article/are-expanded-learning-time-models-worthwhile>)

After a comprehensive search of the literature, 15 empirical studies of various designs conducted since 1985 were found. The literature revealed that (a) designs are generally weak for making causal inferences and (b) outcomes other than achievement are scarcely studied. That said, findings suggest that extending school time can be an effective way to support student learning, particularly (a) for students most at risk of school failure and (b) when considerations are made for how time is used. (Review of Educational Research, retrieved on Thursday, February 07, 2013 from: <http://rer.sagepub.com/content/80/3/401.short>)

Teachers and support staff will complete bi-weekly journals and checklists that will be reviewed by the Thirkell Turnaround Team in order to ensure that all staff members are using identifiable instructional strategies and maximizing classroom instructional time. The Thirkell Turnaround Team has also created an educational blog for teachers to collaborate regularly.

Detail how the school will provide appropriate social, emotional and community services that support students.

The Thirkell Turnaround Team (TTT) has researched social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. It has been determined that there are five featured components of a purposeful SEL program:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Social Awareness
4. Relationship Skills
5. Responsible Decision-Making

In reviewing the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2013) it is strongly recommended that leadership make careful consideration to selecting and implementing a SEL program as there are many models/frameworks from which to choose.

The Thirkell Turnaround Team has reviewed all of the proposed Elementary (K-5) SEL programs and has determined that the Caring School SY 2012-2013

Community program is the best fit for our students, parents, staff and community members based on relevant research.

Caring School Community has been evaluated in multiple studies (three RCTs, two quasi-experimental studies). The largest sample included 40 schools. Students have been followed over a five-year period. Most of the students were considered African American or Hispanic. This is an appropriate fit for our student population which is made of 99% African American children.

Many of the available program models have over 75 lessons that would need to be integrated in the classroom, school-wide and with parent and community involvement. Thirkell Elementary is committed to improving student self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness and responsible decision-making; however, given the number of academic protocols that are related to our Turnaround Plan, we feel that this program has a significant number of lessons (30-35) that can be integrated into our academic curriculum with viable opportunities to practice social and emotional skills in and out of school without overwhelming students and teachers with hundreds of lessons. Most importantly, this program uses meaningful assessment tools (self-report, observation, and measuring student behavior) for monitoring the implementation of the SEL program as well as tracking changes in student behavior.

The Caring School Community program is designed for use in kindergarten through sixth grade and organized around four core educational practices: Class Meetings (30-35 per grade), Cross-Age Buddies, Homeside Activities, and Schoolwide Community-Building Activities. Class Meetings present a schedule of lessons and activities to be implemented throughout the school year. Forty Cross-Age Buddies activities promote bonding between pairs of older and younger students while at the same time supporting exploration of a wide range of academic subjects. Homeside Activities are implemented once or twice a month. These are first reviewed in class, then completed at home with caregivers, and then reflected upon and concluded in class. Schoolwide Community-Building Activities are implemented throughout the school year to build relationships, share knowledge, and promote pride in the school environment. Caring School Community offers suggestions to support English Language Learners, and Homeside Activities are available in English and Spanish. Initial training for the Caring School Community program typically lasts half a day to two full days and is not required. Caring School Community offers a train-the-trainer system to support sustainability.

(Retrieved on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 from: <http://casel.org/guide/framework/caring-school-community/>)

The program package for grades K-6 includes seven grade-level packages for Grades K-6, each including Class Meeting Lessons (Grades K-1 or 2-6), Teacher's Calendar (Grades K-1 or 2-6), Homeside Activities (grade-specific), Schoolwide Community-Building Activities, Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book, and Caring School Community for \$1,605.

Thirkell Elementary is currently a Pre-K-5 school. It has been decided that this program will be purchased for grades 2-5. Based on teacher observations and grade-level discussions, the Thirkell Turnaround Team has determined that our kindergarten and first grade students must utilize all of their dedicated instructional minutes, especially within the English Language Arts block, therefore, they will not begin the Caring School Community program until grade 2.

Teachers in grades 2-5 as well as three instructional specialists will implement the Caring School Community program at Thirkell Elementary School in the Fall of 2013. Teachers and support staff will review the grade level classroom packages in August 2013. It is anticipated that Class Meeting activities and Cross-Age Buddies activities will last no longer than 40 minutes once a week throughout the 2013-2014 school year. Schoolwide Community Building activities are expected to be less frequent (1-2 per month). Each grade level package contains a teacher's calendar with suggested timelines for each activity.

Assurances Report

Michigan Department of Education Assurances

Priority Assurances

Assurance	Certified	Comment/Attachment
Our school has implemented an evaluation process, which includes a significant connection with student growth, to assess the effectiveness of teachers and leaders working in our school. (Attach a copy of the evaluation tool below.)	Yes	<u>Attachment:</u>
Our school has a Professional Development calendar that supports the reform effort selected for our school. (Attach a copy of the professional development calendar below.)	Yes	<u>Attachment:</u>
Our school has implemented an extended learning time model to increase instructional time as evidenced by our daily school schedule, teacher collaboration schedule and student schedule. (Attach a copy of the schedule(s) below.)	Yes	
Our school provides additional time to improve student learning and engagement through enrichment activities for students.	Yes	
Our school provides time for teachers to collaborate, plan and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.	Yes	
Our school District has a Memorandum of Understanding or Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Local Education Association regarding the measures required to implement the reform/redesign plan. Alternately, Public School Academies without a Local Education Association can provide documentation of board approval of the submitted reform plan.	Yes	<u>Attachment:</u>